



How to Back Up Your Computer

Simple instructions for
Windows 10 and macOS

Why it's important to back up

More than files: hard work and fun memories

Backing up your computer is one of the most important steps you can take to safeguard your work. Everything from tax returns to business records to your family's Grand Canyon photos are at risk from data loss, but backing up everything is simple and easy.

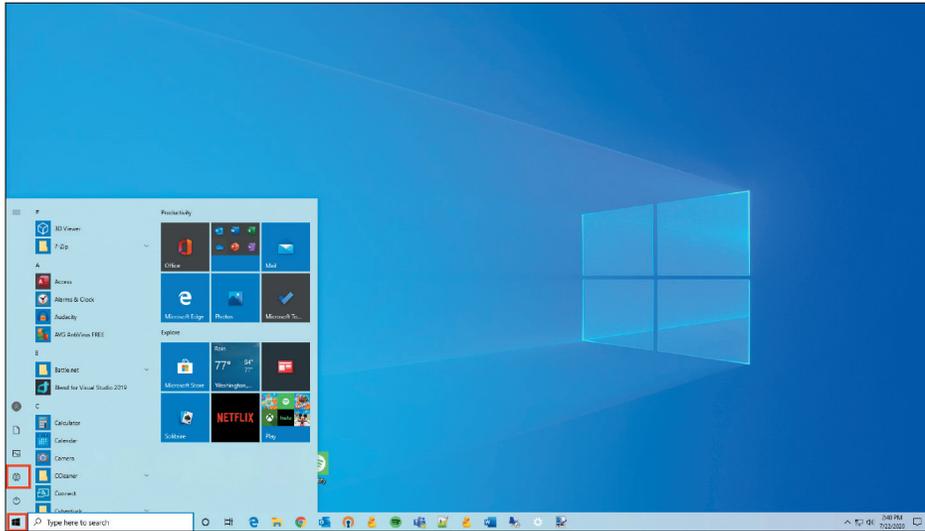
We've designed this ebook to help you start backing up your data from either a Mac or a Windows PC. While there are a few different ways to do this, we think these straightforward steps are the best place to start if you're new to the process.



Backing up with Windows 10

Step 1

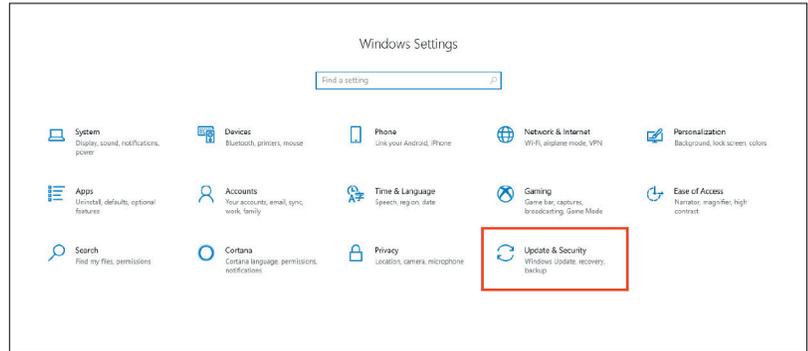
Click the Windows main menu button, then select the gear icon to access **Windows Settings**.



Or use the shortcut method: Open your Windows menu by pressing the **Windows key** on your keyboard. Then type "backup" in the search bar and hit the enter key to access the Backup window. Skip to Step 4.

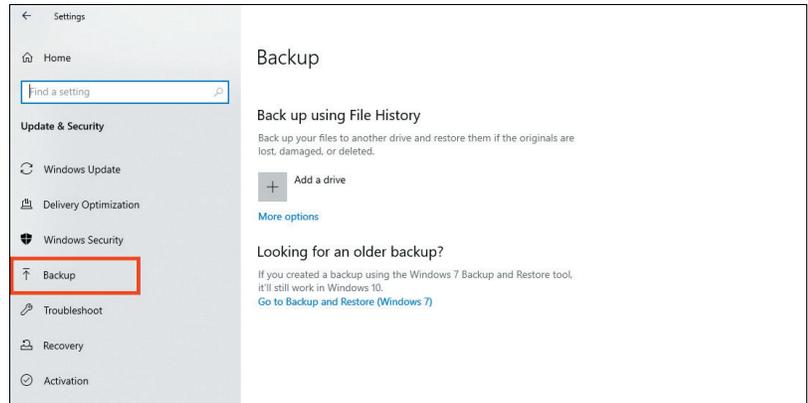
Step 2

Select **Update & Security**.



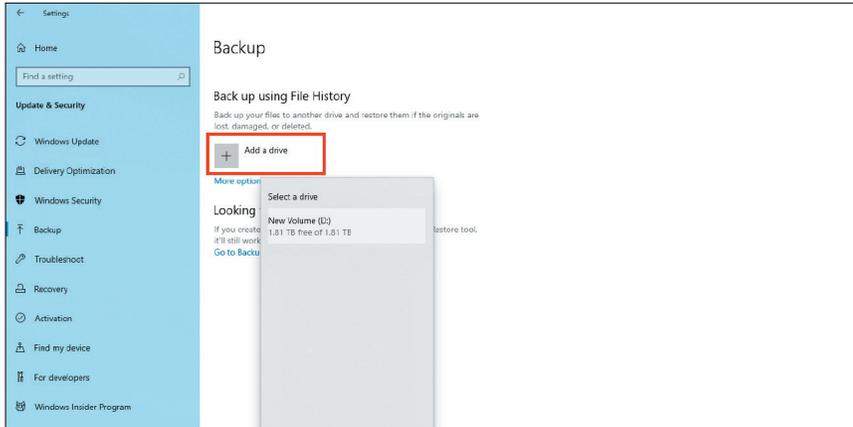
Step 3

In the left menu, click on the **Backup** option.



Step 4

Click **Add a drive**. If one (or more) drives are connected, a list of drives will appear. Select the drive you'd like to use for backups.

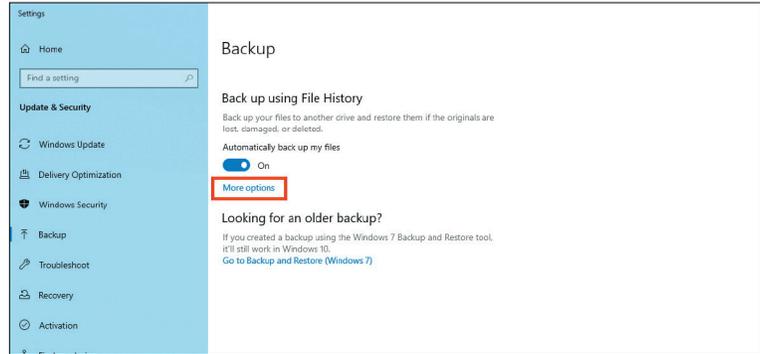


Usually, “C:” is taken by the main drive and “D:” by the CD/DVD drive. The default drive lettering (“E:”, “D:”, etc.) will assign itself to the next available letter.

If you have multiple drives connected, you may want to rename your removable drives. That way, you can tell them apart when you start the backup process. To rename your drive, right click the drive name in a separate File Explorer window and select **Rename**.

Step 5

To customize your backup settings, select the **More options** link located underneath the **On** button.



Step 6

Under **Back up my files**, select how often you'd like to back up (every 10 minutes, daily, etc).

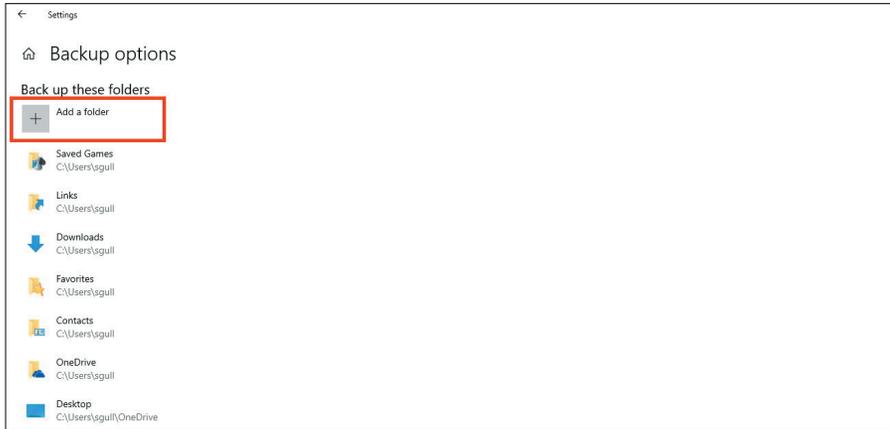
If you'd like to remove backups after a set amount of time, under **Keep my backups**, select an option to remove backups after 1 day, 1 month, etc.



By default, Windows Backup chooses to back up your files every hour and to keep all backups. Whether you choose every 10 minutes or daily (the maximum) depends on your backup strategy, but for most users, keeping the default for both is the best option.

Step 7

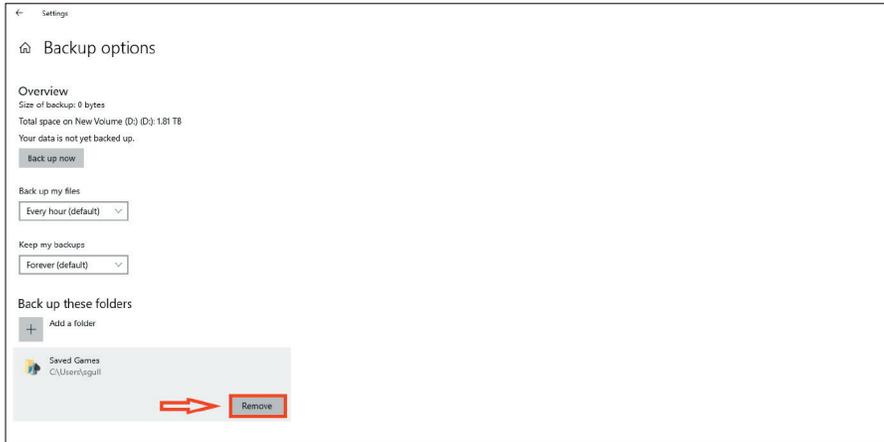
Under **Back up these folders**, Windows will automatically add commonly backed up folders, along with other recommendations. Check all the automatically added folders in the list. If the folder you'd like to back up doesn't appear on the list, click the **Add a folder** button and select any folder in the pop-up window.



Choosing which folders to backup is entirely up to you. Photos, Documents, Videos, and cloud storage (like OneDrive) are a good start, but it's good practice to double-check the folders Windows recommends.

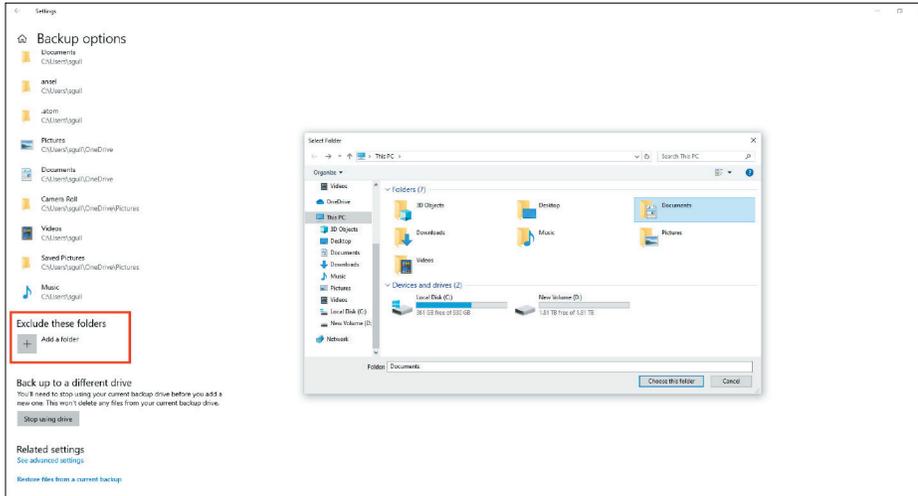
Step 7a (optional)

If you'd like to remove any of the folders Windows Backup automatically picked, click on any folder in the list and select the **Remove** button.



Step 7b (optional)

To exclude folders, scroll down to the **Exclude these folders** option. Click **Add a folder** and choose any folder in the pop-up window.



Note: “Excluding” and “removing” folders get you the same result. The only difference is “Excluding” provides a visible list, which you might want for organizational purposes.

Step 8

Once all your settings are looking good, you can choose to start a manual back up by clicking the **Back up now** button at the top of the Backup window.

Overview

Size of backup: 0 bytes

Total space on New Volume (D:) (D:): 1.81 TB

Your data is not yet backed up.

Back up now

***You're all set!** Now you can try out your current backup setup and choose different backup strategies, depending on what works best for you.*

Changing Your Backup Device

If you want to change your backup drive, click the **Stop using drive** button. Then navigate to the previous window (Step 3) to choose a new backup drive.

Back up to a different drive

You'll need to stop using your current backup drive before you add a new one. This won't delete any files from your current backup drive.

Stop using drive

Choosing Automated vs. Manual Backup

Automated Backup: If you want Windows to automatically backup your files, then keep the toggle set to **On** and let Windows work on its own.

Manual Backup: Toggle **Automatically backup my files** to the **On** position, select **More options**, and click “Backup now”.

To make sure it doesn't automatically backup, go back to the **Backup** screen, and toggle **Automatically backup my files** to the **Off** position. Rinse and repeat anytime you'd like to manually back up.

We generally recommend keeping backups automated. However, you can always run a manual backup anytime you feel it's necessary.

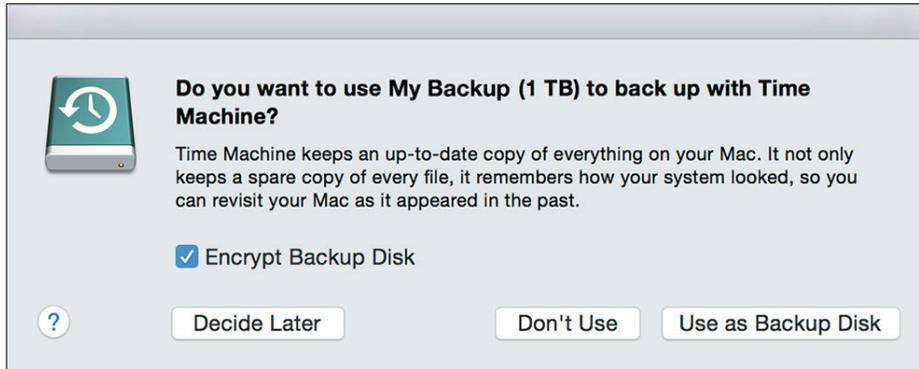
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Backing up with Time Machine on macOS

Step 1a

Connect your storage device to your Mac. If the drive is unformatted, macOS will prompt you to if you would like to use Time Machine. (Go to Step 1b if the prompt doesn't display.)

Select **Use as Backup Disk**.



All done! Your Mac will automatically back up your files. The first time it makes a complete backup will take the longest, but you can continue using your computer during this time. When it's finished you'll receive a short notification.

Step 1b

If no Time Machine prompt appears when you plug in your storage device, select **Apple > System Preferences** from the menu bar.



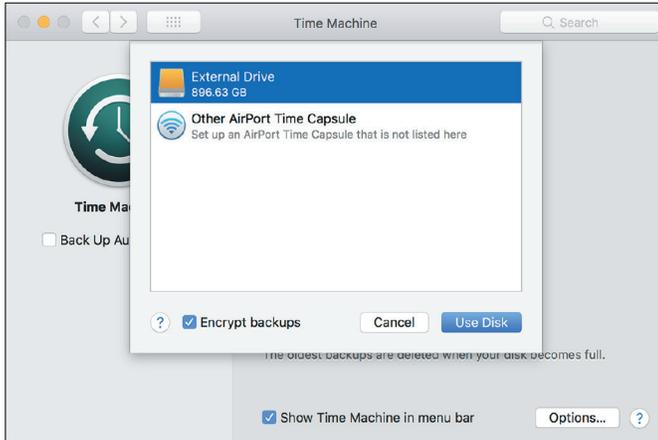
Step 2

Select Time Machine from the menu and then click **Select Backup Disk**.

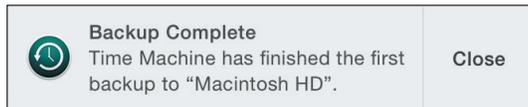


Step 3

Select your storage device from available drives list. Check **Encrypt backups** and then click **Use Disk**. If your drive is already formatted, you will be promoted to erase the drive.



Ensure you've got everything on the drive backed up elsewhere! Everything on the external storage device will be lost.



All done!

Your Mac will automatically back up your files. The first time it makes a complete backup will take the longest, but you can continue using your computer during this time. When it's finished you'll receive a short notification.



Thank you for reading ioSafe's Data Backup 102 ebook!

We hope these simple steps will help you set up your personal or professional backup workflow and ensure that your work is safeguarded.

For more insights, [visit our blog](#) or find out what you can do to start forming your personal data protection plan:

[Learn More About Data Backup](#)

iosafe.com
sales@iosafe.com